



Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador

Hon. Ross Wiseman, Minister
Department of Finance
Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

March 6, 2015

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (MANL) I thank you for the opportunity to take part in this consultation process and for Government's continued support of museums in Newfoundland and Labrador. Our association is the largest heritage organization in the province with members from Makkovik on the North Coast of Labrador to Mistaken Point on the Southern Shore of the Avalon Peninsula. We share our member's commitment to the protection and safeguarding of our province's rich tangible and intangible culture and history. Your ongoing financial assistance through the Cultural Economic Development Program (CEDP) enables MANL to assist 135 member museums, 47 heritage societies, 2,000 volunteers in 120 communities, and mentor thousands of students who provide valuable services to some 380,000 visitors yearly. The Government of Canada Survey of Heritage Institutions: 2011 puts total revenue generation by the sector in Newfoundland and Labrador at \$19,975,000.00, a substantial number indeed and this figure does not include the economic spinoff generated.

As part of its constitutional mandate to promote professionalism and skills development within the museum community, the Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador offers a Certificate in Museum Studies. This nationally recognized program provides museum workers with a general introduction to current theories, standards, and best practices for museums. The content of the certificate program is based on topics covered in MANL's Best Practices publication. There are currently 78 individuals enrolled in the program.

Funding from the CEDP allows us to leverage additional funding from other sources to fulfill this mandate.

In 2014 MANL was charged with raising museum minimum standards as part of our work plan and contribution agreement with the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation. This work is in addition to the activities we already undertake to fulfill our constitutional mandate. This increased workload for our organization requires extra resources to ensure members comply with your Government's goal. We were fortunate in early January 2015 to have been approved for a CEDP project to assist in raising the minimum standards of targeted heritage organizations through education, site visits and training. The lateness of approval for this project has greatly compressed the timeframe and put MANL staff on the road during the difficult winter travel period which is also the closed season for the vast majority of our members.

In order to have less pressure on the timeline and thereby ensuring a greater measure of success in groups meeting the minimum standards deadline, MANL requests that the existing minimum standards funding under the Cultural Economic Development Program be granted as part of our CEDP sectorial support to cover the extra resources required to meet this new goal. Mr. Minister, this is not new money, it is simply allocating funding that currently exists to help MANL complete work in our agreed work plan and the departmental logic model.

To underscore the importance of our members work to the local community I quote from the citation for the 2014 MANL Award of Merit presented in October to an organization I am sure you are familiar with.

"The organisation honoured today celebrates in 2014, its fiftieth anniversary of spearheading the promotion, preservation, and presentation of the history and heritage of the Trinity Bight area. It operates a museum, archives, living history exhibits as well as a number of other buildings of significant historical and cultural importance. This group recognised early on that without some form of intervention important parts of the architectural landscape of the area would disappear. As a result of the tireless work of these dedicated volunteers Trinity Bight has become one of the leading tourist destinations in Newfoundland and Labrador. Not only has it ensured that the cultural landscape of Trinity is preserved for the future, the Trinity Historical Society has also become a significant player in the economic development of the area."

Minister, MANL and its member institutions recognise there are many demands on the limited resources of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. However, we hope that the Provincial Government will itself, recognise the important work our organisation does to preserve, interpret and promote the heritage and culture of Newfoundland and Labrador today and for generations to come.

I thank you for your time and for the opportunity to speak to you today.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Griffin".

John Griffin, President
Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador